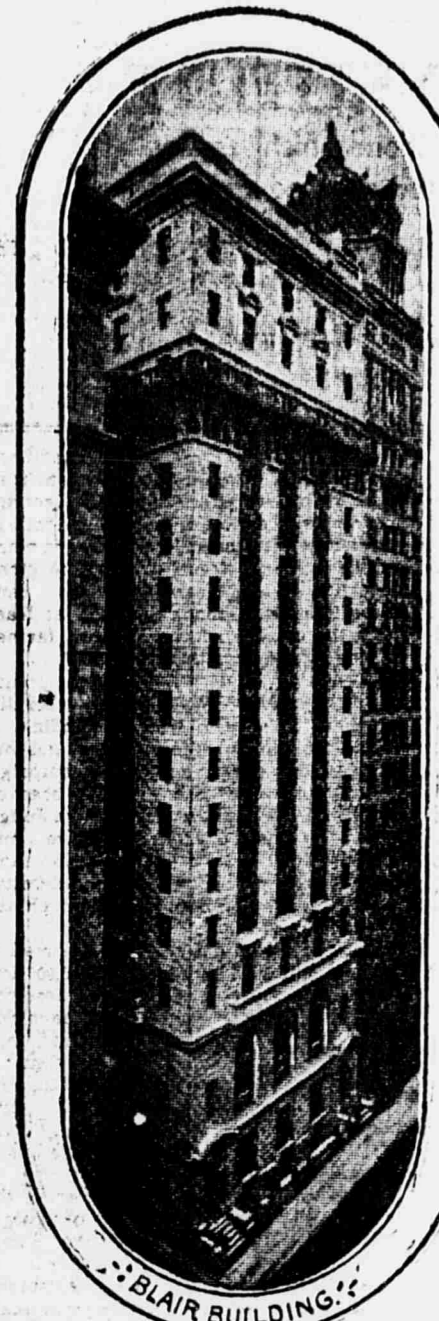


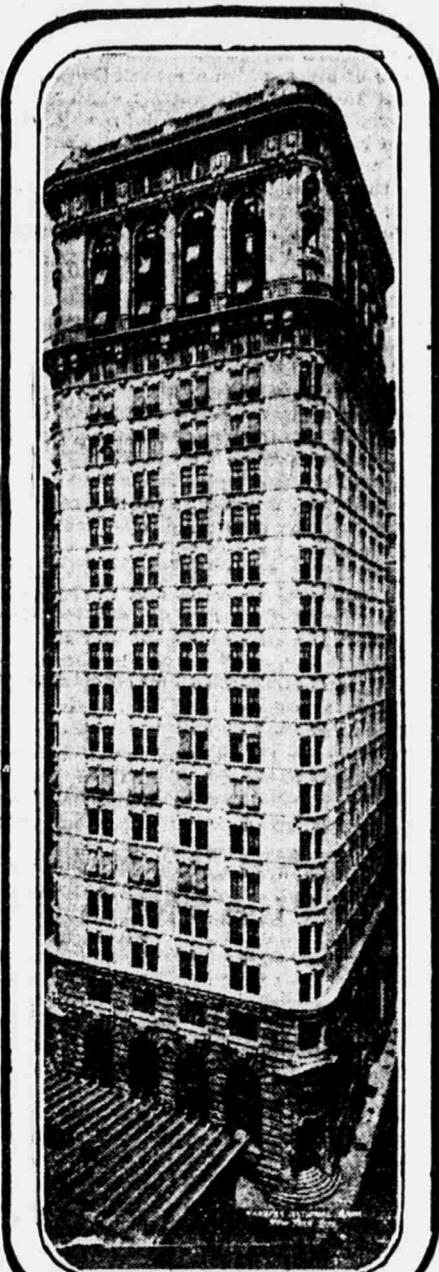
SOME REMARKABLE NEW BUILDINGS IN NEW YORK

SKYSCRAPERS GROWING BIGGER,
MORE LUXURIOUS AND MORE
COSTLY THAN EVER BEFORE

A NEW STANDARD SET FOR THE HO-
TELS OF THE WORLD BY THE LATEST
OF THOSE BUILT IN NEW YORK

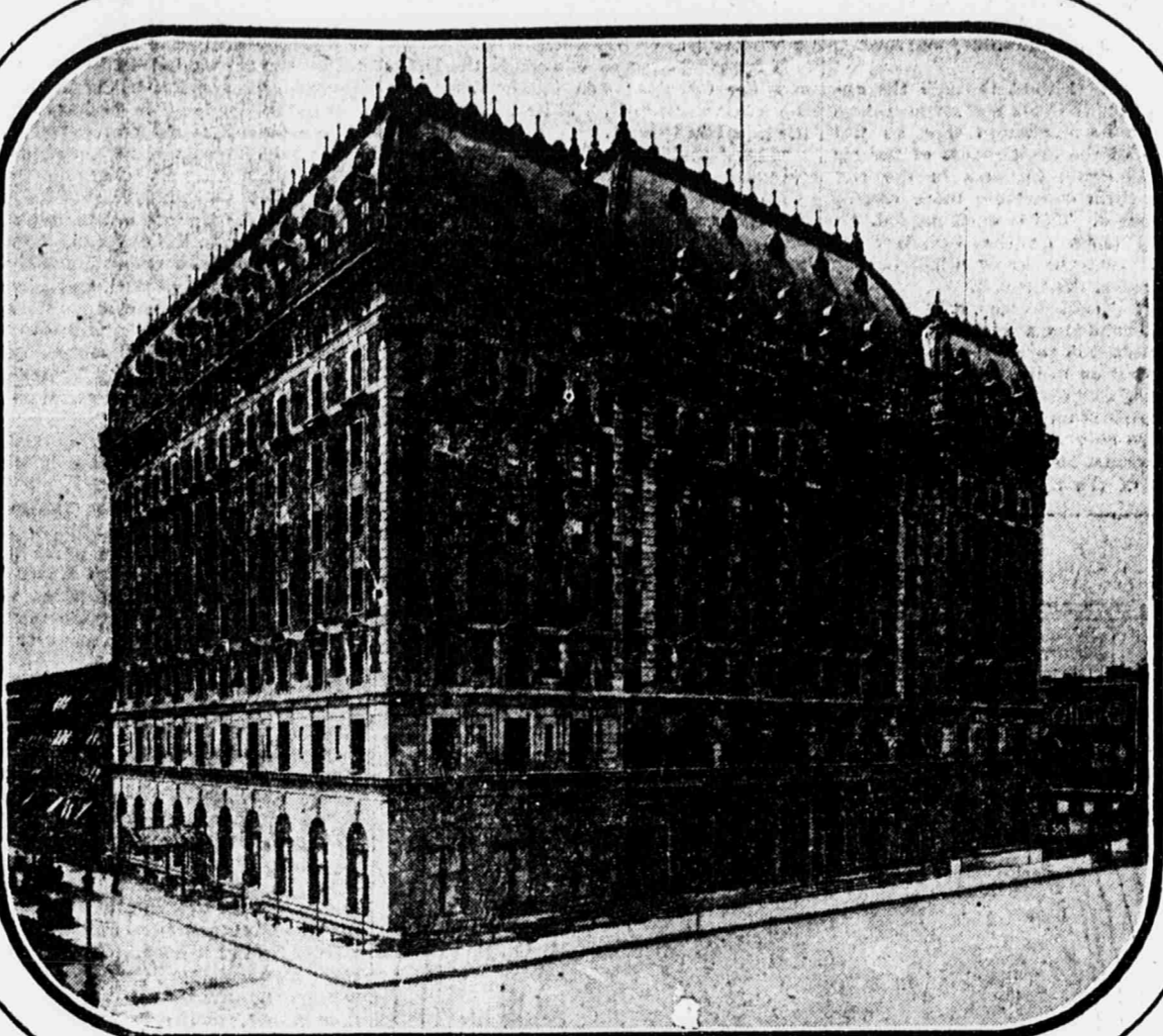


"BLAIR BUILDING."



"HANOVER NATIONAL BANK."

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"HOTEL ASTOR."



"ST. REGIS HOTEL."



"SIXTY WALL ST."



"BEAVER BUILDING."



"TIMES BUILDING."

There were persons in this city not many years ago, when the upward race in skyscraper construction had hardly begun, who predicted that the excessively tall buildings planned would not be successful either as money making properties or as practical office structures.

The lapse of time has proved that these persons were mistaken. Not only has the skyscraper turned out to be a success in every particular, except, perhaps, architecturally, but it has come to be an absolute necessity.

Whether, with the improved facilities for rapid transit shortly to be available in the city, and with the enlarging of the area of concentrated business activity that should follow as a natural result, the skyscraper will continue to be as popular and necessary as it is now remains to be seen, but, in the opinion of many, indications point to the conclusion that it will.

In the buildings erected in the last two years or so, including some of the notable ones now in course of construction, there has been a noticeable increase over the previous average in the size and height of the structures. Where two years ago there was but one Flatiron Building, now there are two or three, all just as remarkable in appearance as the one at Twenty-third street.

But while the office buildings have been growing bigger and higher they have, it is said, been growing more costly, the increase in cost in many instances being not at all proportionate to the increase in size. This has been true, too, in spite of the fact that the general tendency recently has been to minimize external art in the skyscraper and produce a building

with little expression of architectural form.

The increased cost, it is said, results from the more elaborate and substantial finishing of the interior and the more complete equipment of the building with all sorts of modern improvements. For instance, many of the recent skyscrapers, besides having all the usual sanitary equipments, have installed the vacuum system of sweeping.

Lines of hose run from vacuum hydrants in the corridors. Sweepers are attached to the hose, and by running them over the office rug the dirt is transferred in a twinkling from the room hundreds of feet in the air to the basement.

This is only one of the many modern conveniences which the business man of to-day expects to find in these great buildings—buildings that count their occupants by the thousand—that alone constitute in some cases an entire route for a letter carrier and from which the daily mail is carried not by hand, but by the wagon load.

The skyscraper has always been a thorn in the flesh to the architect—the student of the beaux arts and the man who wants frankness of expression in his design.

These men complain that there is no attempt in the American skyscraper to make its appearance express its structure. It is a lie, an uncouth lie, from the foundation to the roof, they say. Seeking to hide the fact that it is built around a steel frame, it simulates solid masonry.

Nearly all of them sin in the same way, these architects say, the buildings having the general appearance of a column with a heavy base, a long central shaft and a decorated capital. What they would have

of the skyscraper, if it really must be, and they admit that it must, is a franker expression of the fact that there is beneath the covering of stone and brick a frame of steel.

There is one building in the city, completed only about a year ago, which architects agree is more successful in this respect than most others. It is called one of the few successful skyscrapers, architecturally regarded, in the city.

It is the Blair Building, at Broad street and Exchange place. A picture of it is included in the group above. Its success lies chiefly in the fact that it does not simulate solid masonry. Its frame of steel is not openly disclosed, but some of the metal columns are permitted to show in the facade.

But while some architects deplore the conventional and what they call inartistic trend in skyscraper architecture, they admit that it is the most notable and the most thoroughly American architecture of the time and that it affords an opportunity for the earning of the largest fees ever obtained by architects in general practice.

So far as the height of the office building of the future is concerned, there is, it is said, practically no limit below 40 or 50 stories imposed by economical or structural considerations. All that will be necessary is a sufficient amount of space for the foundations.

The owners of the buildings have, however, found that there is a limit imposed by the sentimental nature of the office occupant, and that there are few who care

to be higher than the buildings constructed at present. It is not impossible, though, that this objection may disappear in time.

The Hanover National Bank Building, at Nassau and Pine streets; the Beaver Building, at Beaver and Spruce streets; the Times Building, at Broadway and Forty-second street, and the Sixty Wall Street Building, now in course of construction, are some of the most notable structures of the last year or two.

The changes in hotel construction and architecture during the last two or three years have been much more pronounced than in the skyscraper. A distinctly new and higher standard of construction and decoration has been established.

This advance is represented chiefly in the erection of the St. Regis Hotel, at Fifth avenue and Fifty-fifth street, although

when it is said that each of the stones in the cornice at the eighteenth floor weighs between eighteen and twenty tons. The interior is finished in marble and bronze. It is said to be one of the most expensive office buildings in the world.

The Blair Building, which is of white marble, is seventeen stories high and almost equally elaborate in its interior finishings.

The Sixty Wall Street structure will be one of the giants of the city, probably higher than any other office building, exclusive of towers. Its steel frame, partly covered, looms up impressively from the East River and the Brooklyn Bridge, and has caused a lot of wonder and comment.

It will be built in two sections and in its architectural design will illustrate the recent trend toward simplicity in exterior design. The Wall Street wing will be four-

teen stories high and the Pine street section twenty-six. Its height will be 347 feet, the Times Building and the Park Row Building, each with a tower, exceeding it by several feet.

The Beaver Building and the Times Building, like the Flatiron Building, are notable for their striking appearance, and represent some of the best attainments thus far in getting the greatest possible amount of floor room out of the available foundation space.

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the Hotel Astor, at Seventh avenue and Forty-fourth street, and the Belmont and the Brunswick, in course of construction, are factors in the change.

It was not until after the Waldorf-Astoria was opened that the builders of hotels and the men who run them learned that New Yorkers and the American public in general who come here wanted hotels where they could get the best offered by the metropolis and that they were willing to pay well for it. They learned also from the success of the Waldorf that the appearance of the exterior of the hotel and the interior arrangements were much more potent factors in its success than had been supposed before. The St. Regis is eighteen stories high, massive, and of gray limestone, but it will be exceeded in height by the Hotel Belmont and the Brunswick.

As New York sets the fashion for the rest of the country in everything else, skyscrapers included, so also it is predicted by men competent to speak that the advance in hotel construction and decoration as typified in the St. Regis and the Hotel Astor and other new hotels will shortly strike a responsive chord in other large cities, as occurred after the erection of the Waldorf, and that, as a result of what has been done in New York, there may be expected another general upward step in hotel construction and equipment throughout the country.

This means also, these men say, that there will probably be a corresponding rise in the prices of what will be regarded in the future as the first class houses. Whether the people generally want the superior accommodations, hardly enough to pay the increased bill, as they undoubtedly will do in New York, is something that time only will disclose.

EASY GRAFT OF THE MEDIUMS

THEIR VICTIMS DELUDED BY
VERY CHEAP TRICKS.

Nothing Mysterious About the Means by Which They Play on the Credulity of Their Victims—A Chicago Firm's List of Mediums' Supplies—Their Prices.

"I suppose I have one of the queerest fads on earth," said the man on the hotel sofa. "My passion and hobby is mediums, clairvoyants, psychic card readers and others of that ilk. Not that I'm a spiritualist. The graft side of the medium business is what interests me."

"There are poor pickings for me in New York now, because the police have been interfering with the medium business. Still, I can find a cheap little test circle here almost any time, and I even know a place, just off the Tenderloin, where you can see real ghosts developed in full view of the audience. To see it in full blast, though, you must go to Boston or, better, to the Far Western cities."

"Most people suppose that mediums all profess to summon up real ghosts—that, in the language of the profession, they materialize. That isn't true. To one materializing medium in these days there are a hundred test mediums."

"The test medium holds forth usually in a cheap hall. The admission is low, for her patrons are poor. Usually it runs from 10 to 25 cents."

"She starts off with a hymn. Then she borrows an article from each person in the congregation and begins her tests."

"For example, she'll hold up a glove and ask who owns it. When the owner has spoken up she'll hold the glove to her forehead and say something like this:

"I hear the name John. Have you a

John in the spirit world?"

"If the owner of the glove has a John among the departed the medium sends some beautiful communications and then tries to draw the victim out. With a cleverness born of experience, she pleases together his occupation, his troubles and his wants and tells him all about them."

"He's paralyzed with astonishment, and so are the rest of the circle—for the people who go to seances aren't critical, and they go with a great desire to believe."

"One of the hardest things for a test medium to do is to call at once the name of the dear departed in the spirit realm. If she starts off with John, and runs through Mary and Katherine and Lily, and none of them hits the mark, then the most credulous seeker after spirits is inclined to pronounce her a fake. On the other hand, if she hits at once the name of the very spirit which the seeker most desires, she's pronounced a great success."

"Their test means of getting at names is a sort of Mediums' Union, an unorganized society for mutual help which exists in every medium-ridden town."

"Mrs. Jake, the medium, has a new visitor, a fat woman in black, we'll say, who wears her front hair in gray frizzes and has a slight limp. Mrs. Jake tries out a half a dozen names on her. Perhaps she gets down to the sixth before she finds that Robert fits some dead relative of the old lady in black."

"Before Mrs. Jake gets through, she's learned further that the old lady has a dead sister named Annie. The old lady, remembering how long Mrs. Jake has been in getting those names, goes away declaring that she's no good."

"Mrs. Jake knows all that, and knows that the old lady won't come here again, but that she'll surely go to another medium—for when a person is bitten by the spiritualistic bug he usually keeps going to mediums until he gets satisfaction."

"So Mrs. Jake notifies every medium in her crowd, giving a close description of the old lady, together with the names of her spirit friends and any other accurate information which she has been able to drag out in black, with frizzes and a limp,

shows up at the Home of Truth Circle, conducted by Mrs. Soakem, the second night wonder, the old lady in black and off the bat that Robert wants her and a beautiful spirit named Annie is over her shoulder calling her sister."

"She the medium firmly convinced that Mrs. Soakem is a wonder and that immortality is proved. In a Western city I've seen printed blanks used to distribute such information among mediums."

"That isn't their only method of getting names, though. Some of them are very clever lip-readers. When in doubt they play 'William' or 'John,' those being the most common Anglo-Saxon names."

"Then they make it a point to learn the names of people living in the neighborhood and to watch the obituary notices, knowing that half their victims are driven to them by the ache of some recent bereavement."

"That's the nastiest part of the whole business. The laboring men's wives and daughters, the hired girls and stable boys, who haunt cheap seances, come because they're in trouble and want some help and consolation. These people put their hearts on their sleeves and tell about their love affairs and family difficulties in a way that makes you gasp. I blush sometimes to listen to them."

"The cheap test seances don't make the place where the blacks robe in front and where the hull lay in shallow water. Mrs. Smith had a revelation one evening in a full circle. She showed her the exact spot where the hull lay in shallow water. Mrs. Smith had been guided wrong by an evil spirit, and that the expenses of diving had eaten up the capital."

"According to a faker who stood in with her, then, but fell out with her later, she sold \$25,000 worth of stock in her wrecking company stock, shares in an oil company which was to make a fortune from wells discovered by her psychic powers. They took it like lambs, and she's doing business at the same old stand."

"Materializing or bringing ghosts out of the vasty deep doesn't pay so well. It is a kind of public show, with very little side graft. Therefore, it is less common, and admission is higher, usually a dollar a head."

"Developing sittings are a beautiful graft. The medium uses this dodge on

people who have what they call the psychic temperament—they can pick them a mile away."

"These people are usually hankering to be mediums and to talk to the spirits themselves. The medium leads them on, says that they have psychic powers and that they want to come into close communion with them. It all leads up to the private developing seance, which costs all the victims can pay and lasts as long as they'll stand for it."

"This is their common or garden variety of graft. But they work all kinds of 40 or 50 stories. There's a medium in Boston who has cleaned up a pile by 'discovering' lost treasure. Locating mines is a favorite variety in the Far West."

"There is a medium in San Francisco, Mrs. Smith, we'll call her, who's a wonder in her way. The Pacific Mail liner Rio de Janeiro was sunk in the Golden Gate on Washington's Birthday, 1901, with \$60,000 in gold aboard. No one could find the hull."

"After the steamship and wrecking companies had tried and failed, Mrs. Smith had a revelation from the captain of the Rio, which showed her the exact spot where the hull lay in shallow water. Mrs. Smith had this revelation one evening in a full circle. She showed her the exact spot where the hull lay in shallow water. Mrs. Smith had been guided wrong by an evil spirit, and that the expenses of diving had eaten up the capital."

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and in every case the method was the same. The cabinet is hung with black and covered in front with a black curtain. The surrounding wall is also draped in black."

"Often the cabinet is the bow window of a house or hall. The audience is asked to inspect the walls and curtains. They may inspect all they like. The trick isn't there."

"There is a dim, shaded point of light in the back of the room, practically no light at all. When all is ready the medium takes a seat near the curtain and calls for a hyacinth."

"While it is being sung his assistant—usually a woman—seals into the room by a side door near the cabinet. She is dressed in a dead black robe, and against the black background of the walls and cabinet she can't be seen at all in that light, no matter how much she moves. She wears rubber-soled shoes and the hymn helps her to enter without being heard."

"Under the black robe she is dressed in ghostly white, and often she wears a slightly coated with phosphorescent paint to make a shining spirit face."

"When the signal is given to appear she opens the black robe in front and when she disappears she simply closes it again. By closing it a certain way she produces the effect of disappearing through the floor. There are often two or three assistants, one a child or a small woman."

"The developing medium, like the test medium, keeps tabs on the departed dear ones of his regular customers, and trots them out for their benefit. It makes you shamed of humanity to see the way these fakers draw back bereaved mothers who live from week to week just to talk to their dead children."

"There are many other methods of materializing, but this one is the cheapest and most satisfactory, and has supplanted all the others."

"I saw this month in some of the papers that a Chicago man has been exposed as a maker of apparatus for mediums. I've had in my possession for four years the catalogue of a Chicago firm which deals in medium's supplies."

"It came to me through a Post Office employee, who fished it out of a pile of discarded second and third class matter. It was addressed to a medium who had skipped the country."

"This describes and advertises about

a hundred mechanical devices and secrets for the use of mediums. Prices run from \$1 to \$20."

"There are about fifty slate writing devices. One for \$3 is described as very satisfactory, but requires some skill on the part of the medium. For \$10 you can get one which requires no skill. A double slate is written on and closed. When opened, spirit message and answer to any question are found written on it. 'No chemicals,' \$10."

"The firm advertises a full line of single and double slates for cases where local mediums or psychic demonstrators and convince the most sceptical."

"Spirit forms, no two alike, of special luminous material, and very durable, cost from \$20 to \$30. The \$20 ones are children's size. I'm not faking this language. It is all in the catalogue. The whole thing is a regular business that goes on underground and thrives on hundreds of thousands of victims."

"Mediums are usually women. As a class, they are domestic, comfortable, middle aged women, who knit and gossip together in hours, rear large families and support worthless husbands, who collect at the door for the public meetings and help to gather useful information."

"In their public utterances they have a singular line of talk, made up of highfalutin' words and phrases, nearly always used inaccurately, and very bad grammar. In all my experiences with them, I've never known one to talk straight English. A recent medium who'd fallen to be a patient medicine sharp told me once that their public expects bad grammar and that accurate English would drive people away."

"It's part of the graft," he said."

"What made you let her catch you by that old dodge?" asked the man. "She's probably got money in the bank drawing interest."

"I've seen hundreds of them downtown who wanted to go to Harlem," replied the man. "I've seen them in hundreds in Harlem that wanted to go downtown, but this is the first one I have ever encountered who wanted a nickel to go to Brooklyn. That's why."

THE TELLING STROKE.

Point of the Beggar's Tale That Won Her a Dime From a Sceptic.

The man and the woman were on their way to dinner just off Fifth avenue down a side street, when they heard a voice back of them say:

"For the love of God, lady and gentleman, stop and listen to what a poor woman has to say."

They stopped to listen; the woman because she wanted to hear the man out of politeness because the woman had stopped."

"For the love of God, lady and gentleman," began the voice which issued from the lips of another woman not poorly dressed, but with rather a stylish hat and good shoes, "will you give me car fare? I want to go to Brooklyn. There is a lady in Brooklyn who owes me money. If I can only get there she will pay me, maybe."

"If I can only get there maybe she will pay me," repeated the voice. "Lady and gentleman," her utterance was throaty now, full of tears, "will you kindly help me by giving me money to get to Brooklyn, where this lady is? I can prove that she owes me money if you will only listen."

"Give her five cents," said the woman, and the man frowningly reached into his pocket, produced a dime and handed it to her to give.

"God bless you, lady and gentleman," cried the voice more throatily than ever, but with a triumphant ring, though the tears coursed one by one down her cheeks, "may the good Lord bless you, may the good—"

But her listeners were out of hearing by now.

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